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ONE-OF-A-KIND BOOKSTORE CELEBRATES FIRST ANNIVERSARY

At Computer Literacy Book Shop, you won't find best sellers by James Michener or Sidney Sheldon. But if you're looking for information on personal computers, software development or data communications, Computer Literacy has everything you need.

It's been open one year, and already Dan Doernberg and Rachel Unkefer's Sunnyvale, Calif., bookstore has a devoted following. "We're specialists," explains Doernberg. "Computer Literacy is the only bookstore in the country selling computer related books and magazines exclusively. Our customers include some of the best engineers and programmers in the world. They come here to get vital information, or just to see what's new."

Computer Literacy stocks everything from introductory computer manuals and buyers' guides to advanced books on computer math and circuit design. Unkefer stresses that, "Our book selection is wide but the bookstore's primary purpose is specific: to serve Silicon Valley industries. We're here to help computer professionals solve work related problems."

Commitment to the professional is manifested at every level of operations, starting with book display. Books are arranged in

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specific categories, rather than by author or title.

Programmers and DP managers can walk in and quickly find what they need under categories such as "database management," "computer graphics," or "robotics."

Doernberg and Unkefer provide a unique special ordering and delivery service too. If someone requests a book they don't have, the owners will track down the book and mail it to the customer. "Our corporate accounts include IBM, Intel and Apple," says Doernberg. "When these customers call for a book, they often need it for a particular project -- immediately. We'll Express or even hand deliver the book if necessary." Start-up companies have also benefitted greatly from Computer Literacy. Because they have few in-house resources, they depend on the bookstore to provide them with computer product and market information.

The vast selection of books and exceptional service at Computer Literacy have attracted national attention. A UNIX programmer for AT&T's Bell Labs in New Jersey stops by the bookstore whenever he's in the Bay Area. He and his colleagues buy books or simply offer tips on future publications. "We read books, reviews and catalogs to keep our inventory up to date," says Unkefer. "But our best information source is frequently our customers. Not only do they give us leads on new books, they offer expert opinions on our current ones."

Silicon Valley leaders and expert programmers aren't the only ones who benefit from Computer Literacy. There are books

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for nearly every kind of computer novice. A book written specifically for women is entitled, Computer Confidence: A Woman's Guide. Even those in animal husbandry can find a personalized computer book, The Farm Computer.

Doernberg and Unkefer recognize that many people are educating themselves about computers. The bookstore owners, in fact, have had little formal training and "converted" to computer science only four years ago. Doernberg's interest at Duke University was psychology. While on the road to becoming a clinical psychologist, he worked at a halfway house for mental patients. There, he recognized the importance of the word processor in administrative work and became intrigued by the computer "productivity revolution." After only two months at the halfway house, Doernberg bid psychology farewell and began programming work.

Unkefer majored in Latin American studies at Duke (where she and Doernberg met). She took one computer course there and found, to her disappointment, that computers were only used as "large electronic slide rules." But with the advent of the personal computer and diversification of applications, Unkefer's opinion of computer changed dramatically. By 1982, she found herself designing printed circuit boards.

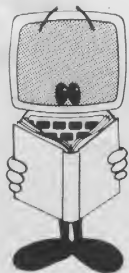
Working with computers wasn't enough for Unkefer and Doernberg. To supplement their knowledge, they combed bookstores and libraries for information. They discovered that librarians and bookstore owners knew little about computers and offered only meager selections of computer books. "The need for a computer

book shop was obvious," says Doernberg. "And the opportunity to fill that need with my own business was thrilling." With family backing and Unkefer's help, Doernberg opened Computer Literacy in March, 1983.

Computer Literacy feature free monthly seminars as well as books and magazines. The staff invites the public to learn about what's new in the computer world. Recently, speakers from local high tech firms and universities have lectured on computer security and hackers, artificial intelligence and "talking chips." In addition to presenting these seminars, Doernberg and Unkefer serve as consultants to the "Whole Earth Software Review." According to Doernberg, this review provides an excellent "grass roots opinion" on the best software for personal computers.

Marking their first anniversary, Dan Doernberg and Rachel Unkefer will host a seminar, March 31, on electronic bulletin boards. But an anniversary isn't the only thing in the works for Dan and Rachel. These two book and computer lovers plan to get married sometime this summer.

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FACT SHEET

THE COMPANY:

Computer Literacy Bookshop was founded in 1983 by Dan Doernberg and Rachel Unkefer. The Bookshop provides Silicon Valley computer professionals with the largest and most up-to-date collection of computer technology literature available under one roof.

FEATURES:

Computer Literacy is the only bookshop in the country that specializes in literature on computers and electronics with more than 15,000 volumes and 4,500 different titles. Located in Sunnyvale California, Computer Literacy sponsors a free monthly speaker's program featuring speakers from local universities and high technology companies.

SERVICES:

Computer Literacy has a national corporate accounts program that services not only Silicon Valley companies but high technology firms located throughout the country. In addition, Computer Literacy offers special ordering and delivery services, locally as well as nationally.

CONSULTING:

Doernberg and Unkefer serve as consultants to the Whole Earth Software Review. Their contributions to Whole Earth provides excellent "grass roots opinion" on the best books for personal computer users. The store, with its staff of nine, also offers informal consulting to professionals who seek reference materials on projects.

FOUNDERS:

Both Doernberg and Unkefer are graduates of Duke University. Doernberg was introduced to computers through using a word processor. From this introduction he went on to programming for Multi List and then founded Computer Literacy Bookshop. Unkefer began with a computer class at Duke and was designing printed circuit boards before founding the Bookshop.

LOCATION:

520 Lawrence Expressway
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 730-9112

The Mercury News

Retailing



Cap Carpenter - Business Monday

Dan Doernberg is owner of Computer Literacy

They're entitled

Bookstores stock a flurry of guides and manuals for computer users

By Jonathan Greer
Business Writer

The computer revolution, which once threatened to replace the printed word, instead is giving publishers something new to print: books about personal computers.

In the past six months, more than 100 new titles have appeared on bookshelves in Silicon Valley and elsewhere. The books, which generally are written for novices, include buying guides and instruction manuals for different machines. Though the vast majority are paperbacks, retail prices for the books are high, running as much as \$15 each.

"Computer books are the fastest selling category in the book business right now," said David Smith, a computer book reviewer for Publishers' Weekly, an industry trade journal.

Once the province of textbook publishers, computer books are being distributed by mainstream publishers as well. "Publishers are scrambling over themselves to publish them," said one observer.

Smith points to the sheer volume of home computer sales as the reason for the sudden interest of mainstream publishers. "Timex expects to sell a million units, right? The publishers of these books expect to sell a couple hundred thousand copies each."

Even NAL, a mass market paperback publisher that sells books you can find on the supermarket checkout line, has gotten into the business. "When those guys

get into computer books, you know it's a mass market," said one bookstore manager.

The rising popularity of computer books has spawned at least one full-scale computer bookstore in Silicon Valley. Computer Literacy, on Lawrence Expressway in Sunnyvale, caters to computer buffs and the uninitiated alike.

Dan Doernberg, owner of the month-old store, said he opened the store to fill a gap. "I found that people in bookstores couldn't tell me anything about their (computer) books, and people in com-

puter stores didn't want to sell me books. They wanted to sell me a computer."

Doernberg, a former programmer, said everyone on his staff is versed in computers. The store stocks 1,500 titles, ranging from technical manuals to the most popular "how-to" books.

According to industry sources, the hottest book on the market these days is Peter McWilliams' "The Personal Computer Book." It's a primer on how to purchase a personal computer. McWilliams, a Los Angeles-based author who pub-

lished the book himself, said 190,000 copies of the book have been printed so far.

McWilliams sees a big market in computer books—at least until computer manufacturers wake up to the fact that their instruction manuals aren't telling users what they need to know.

"That's the real scandal of the industry," said McWilliams.

Unlike McWilliams' book, most of the personal computer books on the market are geared to specific machines, such as the IBM personal computer or the Apple II.

They have titles like "The Timex Personal Computer Made Simple," a new paperback published by NAL.

Local book merchants say that books detailing how to use personal computers are among their bestsellers. "In three years, our computer section has tripled from 12 feet to 36 feet (of shelf space)," said Vonna Pinrentel, assistant manager of the B. Dalton bookstore in Cupertino.

A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books, a Cupertino bookstore, stocks about 300 computer titles and sells about 70 computer books

a week, according to Alan Shanklan, a clerk at the store. While that may not seem like many at a store that sells 1,800 books a week, Shanklan said it's a lot for a single category.

Shanklan said his store stocks many different books on the IBM, Atari, Radio Shack and Apple small computers.

Of course, books on computers aren't new to Silicon Valley, where many of the breakthroughs in the computer industry have occurred. Bookstores in the Bay Area tend to carry more technical titles than stores in other parts of the nation.

At Stacey's Bookstore of Palo Alto, for example, there are 2,000 computer and technical books on the shelf. The store says it has the most extensive computer book selection in the nation, though that's a hard claim to verify.

"Any store in this area is going to sell more computer books than anyone elsewhere," said Bob Dickey, an assistant manager who runs the technical department at Stacey's.

Computer and technical books are the bread and butter of Stacey's business. While the store stocks 15,000 titles ranging from fiction to folklore, the 2,000 title computer section accounts for 50 percent of the store's sales volume.

Because the store relies on computer books for so many sales, Stacey's is serious about keeping the department fully stocked.

"We try to order everything available in English," said Dickey.

Computer books are the fastest selling category in the book business.

— David Smith,
computer book reviewer



*Dan Doernberg
Rachel Unkefer
founders*

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